the skill level of the unemployed so as to improve their employability. Meghalaya is included in the scheme.

Second Labour Commission

1318. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Union Cabinet has decided to extend the terms of the Second Labour Commission till February 15, 2001 which was entrusted with the task of formulating labour reforms;

(b) whether several Sub-Committees have been set up to work out legislation to safeguard the interests of the workers, in unorganized sector, which forms over 70 per cent of the vast workforce in the country; and

(c) if so, by when these reforms would be approved finally and brought in force?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI MUNI LALL): (a) The Government has extended the term of the Second National Commission on Labour upto 15.02.2002.

(b) and (c) Six Study Groups have been set up by the Second National Commission on Labour. These are on Review of Laws, Umbrella Legislation for Workers in the Unorganised Sector, Globalisation and its Impact, Social Security, Women and Child Labour and Skill Development, Training and Workers Education. Out of these, the Study Groups on Umbrella Legislation for Workers in the Unorganised Sector, Social Security, Skill Development, Training and Workers Education and Women and Child Labour have gone into the issues concerning the interests of the unorganised sector workers. The report of the Commission is expected by 15.02.2002.

Significance of contract labour in public sector undertakings

1319. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Supreme Court's judgement on allowing contract labour in Public Sector Undertakings is of great significance as they now can increase or decrease their labour force to meet the requirements of production and thus increase profitability; and

(b) if so, what action Government are taking to protect interest of the present labour?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI MUNI LALL): (a) A five judge Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court in their judgement dated 30.08.2001 in the case of Steel Authority of India Limited and Others Versus National Union of Water Front Workers and Others have affirmed that the Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970 does not provide for automatic absorption of contract labour on issuance of a prohibitory notification by the 'appropriate Government' under section 10 of the Act and consequently, the principal employer cannot be required to order absorption of the contract labour working in the concerned establishment. The above judgement has also quashed the Notification dated 9th December 1976 issued by the Central Government under Section 10 of the Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970 to prohibit employment of contract labour for sweeping, cleaning, dusting and watching of buildings owned or occupied by establishments in respect of which the appropriate Government under the said Act is the Central Government.

(b) The Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act and the Rules made thereunder Contain provisions for protecting the interests of Contract labour in respect of working conditions, payment of wages and other amenities relating to their welfare and health.

Employment situation in Himachal Pradesh

1320. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) what are the findings of the National Sample Survey on employment situation in Himachal Pradesh during 1999-2000 and 2000-2001;

(b) the reasons for rise in unemployment rate, especially for rural youths in the State; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to accelerate job opportunities for rural youths?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI MUNI LALL): (a) As per National Sample Surveys carried out by National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO), during 1993-94 and 1999-2000, the